

**REGIONAL PREPARATORY MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE OF LATIN AMERICA  
AND THE CARIBBEAN FOR THE SECOND PHASE OF THE WORLD SUMMIT  
ON THE INFORMATION SOCIETY**

**RIO DE JANEIRO COMMITMENT**

(Rio de Janeiro, 8-10 June 2005)

We, the representatives of the Latin American and Caribbean countries, are gathered here in the City of Rio de Janeiro, from 8 to 10 June 2005, at the Latin American and Caribbean Regional Preparatory Ministerial Conference for the Second Phase of the World Summit on the Information Society,

Considering the Bavaro Declaration, adopted at the Latin American and Caribbean Regional Preparatory Ministerial Conference for the First Phase of the World Summit on the Information Society, held in Punta Cana, Dominican Republic, from 29 to 31 January 2003,

Reaffirming the principles and objectives agreed upon in the Declaration and the Action Plan, adopted in the First Phase of the World Summit on the Information Society, as well as the importance of the Second Phase to consolidate an international agenda for the Information Society, aimed towards the realization of the Millennium Development Goals and the promotion of social, economic and cultural development,

Declare:

1. That we are deeply committed to building an inclusive and development-oriented information society in Latin America and the Caribbean based on the principles of peace, human rights, solidarity, freedom, democracy, sustainable development and cooperation between nations as a part of the global information society. We will also contribute to the creation of such a society at the global level;

2. That we attribute the utmost importance to building in the region an information society aimed at promoting integration and social, economic and cultural development of Latin-American and Caribbean countries;

3. Our commitment as Governments to facilitate the inclusion of all stakeholders —the private sector, civil society, the scientific and academic community, and other interested parties— in the process of building an information society based on shared knowledge;

4. Our commitment to create an enabling environment for investment and innovation that fosters regional cooperation and partnerships between the public and private sector and invests resources and capital, as appropriate, in improving access to and awareness of ICT potential within the context of business social responsibility;

5. Our conviction that information and communication technologies are not an end in themselves, but rather an instrument for development that seeks to attain equitable and sustainable human development within the framework of economic growth, full employment and competitiveness;

6. Our commitment to take advantage of this unique opportunity and numerous alternatives presented by information and communication technologies to strengthen solidarity among and within regions and to provide universal access for all to information and knowledge and our commitment to respect the right of indigenous peoples to freely pursue their social and economic development by creating, in close collaboration with them, government programmes for access to ICTs that attend to their special situation and protect their heritage and cultural legacy;

7. Our resolve to use the potential of ICTs to achieve the Millennium Development Goals: eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; achieve universal primary education; promote gender equality and empower women; reduce child mortality; improve maternal health; combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; ensure environmental sustainability; develop a global partnership for development; and create a more peaceful, just and prosperous world;

8. Our commitment to strengthen regional cooperation and coordination to promote a culture of cyber-security that will allow information security and network security to be balanced with privacy and consumer protection while new applications are developed. The above mentioned commitment is undertaken with the view to preventing the use of information resources and technologies for criminal and terrorist purposes, within a framework of respect for human rights, and to combat illegal uses and misuses of ICTs such as spam, which could affect the trust of users or the stability and security of information resources and networks. In addition, account must be taken of each country's level of social and economic development and the development-oriented aspects of the information society must be respected;

9. Our resolve to strengthen regional cooperation and coordination, and to take appropriate actions under the rule of law against abusive uses of ICTs, such as illegal and other acts motivated by any form of racism or discrimination, hatred, violence, especially against women and girls, all forms of child abuse, and trafficking in, and exploitation of, human beings;

10. Our belief that digital inclusion is an integral component of social inclusion in a world that is being increasingly influenced by information and communication technologies. ICTs can and must be used as an efficient tool in the fight against hunger, poverty and illiteracy;

11. Our firm conviction that the development of human resources is a major cornerstone in building the information society, not only at the technical level of creation, distribution and usage of information but also in terms of a more practical capacity to leverage information for socio-economic development, whilst highlighting that regional cooperation is a cross-cutting necessity;

12. Our interest in taking advantage of information and communication technologies by creating new means of dialogue between the society and the State and by expanding and improving the availability of public services through electronic means and traditional means;

13. Our commitment to renew and expand cooperation among all Latin American and Caribbean countries, including within and among sub regions and other bilateral and multilateral initiatives, by facilitating the exchange of experiences and the transfer of knowledge and technologies between our countries and by promoting the qualification and training of technicians and the development of applications and solutions in e-Government, e-Business, e-Education, e-Health, e-Learning, e-Employment, e-Environment, e-Agriculture, e-Science, e-Tourism, e-Culture and Cyber-Security, among others;

14. Our strong rejection of any unilateral measure not in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations that impedes, in the construction of the information society, the full achievement of economic and social development by the population of the affected countries or that hinders the well-being of the population; and our commitment, consequently, to work in order to assist countries affected by such measures to overcome obstacles which prevent their populations from fully enjoying the benefits of the information society;

15. Our interest to promote the growth of e-Commerce and e-Business, by facilitating the digital inclusion and capacity building of micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs);

16. Our firm conviction that our Governments can take full advantage of the applications and solutions of information and communication technologies to enable a modern, efficient and transparent public administration;

17. Our interest in fostering the development of an infrastructure of networks, which is indispensable to the regional information society, including Internet exchange points, regional backbones and root servers, while respecting the reality and specific needs of Latin America and the Caribbean;

18. Our commitment to provide universal access through networks to ITCs, making them available to all the countries in the Region and to all its citizens; this will include, among others multipurpose public community access points, radio and TV based in local communities; and other wired and wireless technologies; all of the above, taking into consideration the sustainability and permanent development of this projects and initiatives.

19. Our interest to conduct further studies and research regarding digital TV and other wired and wireless technologies, considering its interactive impacts on digital inclusion, regional integration, regional cooperation in content and technological production. The adoption or development of standards of digital TV should be analyzed in accordance with regional realities and national interest and through regional cooperation;

20. Our firm conviction that all individuals should take an active part in an information society based on shared knowledge, not only as users of new technologies, but also as agents of development and content production. To achieve this, we reaffirm the need for promoting the free flow of ideas and information and the development of a regional and global culture of knowledge sharing.

21. Our conviction that Governments, the private sector, civil society, the scientific and academic community, and users can utilize various technologies and licensing models, including those developed under proprietary schemes and those developed under open-source and free modalities, in accordance with their interests and with the needs to have reliable services and implement effective programmes for their citizens. Taking into account the importance of proprietary software in the markets of the countries in the region, we reiterate the need to encourage and foster collaborative development, interoperative platforms, and free and open-source software, principally for educational and digital inclusion programmes.

22. Our commitment to strengthen regional cooperation and coordination for the promotion and creation of new mechanisms for financing the development of national content, application and software industries.

23. Our gratitude for the work carried out by the Working Group on Internet Governance (WGIG), created by the UN Secretary-General, in accordance with the mandate of the Geneva Summit, and our intention to take into consideration its final report, to be presented in July 2005.

24. Our commitment to contribute to the evolution of an international Internet governance system based on the Geneva Principles, particularly those of multilateralism, transparency and democracy.

25. Our conviction that all stakeholders —Governments, the private sector, civil society and other interested parties— should actively participate in Internet governance in a coordinated and balanced manner, commensurate with their respective roles and responsibilities.

26. Our recognition of the importance of the discussion of public policy issues related to all aspects of Internet governance.

27. Our understanding, as a region, of the necessity to engage in a productive, positive, constructive, and open debate regarding the future work that should be done on Internet governance after the Tunis Phase on World Summit on the Information Society.

28. Our commitment to work on reducing the imbalances in international interconnection costs (IIC) to the Internet for all developing countries, particularly those affecting LDCs and Small Island Developing States of the Caribbean, considering the ongoing studies being conducted by ITU and the recommendations it makes based on those studies;

29. Our decision to work together with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and relevant regional organizations to safeguard the use of the radio frequency spectrum in the public interest, in accordance with the principles of legality with full observance of laws and international agreements, as well as national and international regulations; We also, recognize that radio frequency spectrum is a limited resource, we decide to continue working in its management with equal opportunities of access.

30. Our will to strengthen regional cooperation and coordination in the framework of the Monterey Consensus in order to maintain existing financing commitments and foster the development and creation at national level of innovative mechanisms for financing the local production of equipment, parts and components, and digital devices for infrastructure and ICT industries, including application, software, and local-language content.

31. Our conviction that the global digital solidarity is essential for reducing the digital gap and for strengthening the integration of Latin American and Caribbean countries. We believe that private investment plays an important role in the availability of information and communication technology. We are also convinced that public finance and international economic cooperation should play a mayor role in the provision of ICT access and services to rural areas and to marginalized and undeserved populations. It is our understanding that financial support for ICT infrastructure projects and for the development of related capacities in the region should be aligned with our countries' development priorities and national development strategies;

32. Our commitment to fully support improvements and innovations, in an equitable manner, aimed at alleviating the problem of the external debt of developing countries while making, as appropriate, effective use of debt relief mechanisms as outlined in the Geneva Plan of Action, including, inter alia, debt cancellation and debt swapping, which may be used for financing ICTs for development projects, including those set within the framework of poverty reduction strategies;

33. Recognizing that most of the global goals in the Plan of Action of the first phase of the World Summit on the Information Society have been set for the year 2015, and in accordance with the Plan of Action of Quito and the Agenda of Connectivity in the Americas, we attach importance to establishing concrete objectives for regional cooperation, taking into account the different national circumstances of each member. These objectives, with relevant deadlines for their achievement by 2007, can serve as useful benchmarks for actions and for the evaluation of the progress made towards the attainment of the overall objectives of the information society.

We hereby attach the following Regional Plan of Action for the Information Society in Latin America and the Caribbean, eLAC 2007, as an integral part of the outcome of this Conference.

We, the participants in the Latin American and Caribbean Regional Preparatory Ministerial Conference for the Tunis Phase of the World Summit on the Information Society, warmly thanks the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil for having organized the Conference and invite it to present this declaration as a regional position and contribution to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the Tunis Phase of the World Summit on the Information Society, to be held in November 2005. We also recognize and thank the important technical support provided by ECLAC.

Rio de Janeiro, June 10<sup>th</sup> 2005.